

Commissioner for Patents

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REMARKS

I. Status of the Application

Claims 1-15 are pending in the original application. By this Preliminary Amendment, Applicant cancels claim 6; and places the limitations of the original claim 6 into original claim 5.

II. Information Disclosure Statement

Applicant submits herewith a form PTO/SB/08A, including copies of the patents which may be material to the examination of this application and in respect to which there may be a duty to disclose in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.56. The references listed on the attached form PTO/SB/08A were cited by the US Receiving Office in a PCT patent application filed based on the present application, and are provided herewith within three (3) months of mailing by the US Receiving Office.

ADDITIONAL FEE FOR INDEPENDENT CLAIMS

Previously, the application contained four (4) independent claims and 15 total claims, and payment was made therefor with the filing of the application. As amended, the application contains four (4) independent claims and 14 total claims. Thus, Applicant believes that no additional fee is required for this Preliminary Amendment.

CONCLUSION

For all the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the Applicants have made a patentable contribution to the art and that this response places the above-identified application in

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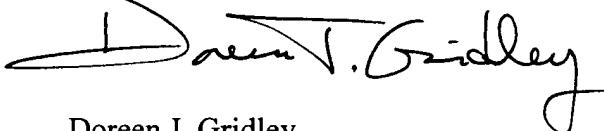
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condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

In the event the Applicants have inadvertently overlooked the need for an extension of time or payment of an additional fee, the Applicants conditionally petition therefor, and authorize any fee deficiency to be charged to deposit account 09-0007.

Sincerely,

ICE MILLER



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Date: 01/13/05

DJG/pgf

Enclosures: Form PTO/SB/08A with Copy of Cited Patents
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